

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. - 39. (Canceled)

40. (New) A settlement system for providing a plurality of different services to a user based on an amount of money paid by the user, said system comprising:

a media having at least one ID number recorded thereon;

a settlement terminal device located at a retail location and configured to read the ID number recorded on the media for input of balance information equivalent to the amount of money paid by the user in association with the ID number, and to transmit said ID number in association with said balance information to a settlement authentication device via a public network;

said settlement authentication device being configured to store said balance information in association with said ID number received from said settlement terminal device;

a terminal device used by the user to for accessing a specific service of said plurality of services by sending a request to a service provision device over the public network;

said service provision device being configured to send a query over the public network to said settlement authentication device to determine whether to provide the specific service; and

said settlement authentication device further being configured to receive the query and determine whether the specific service of said plurality of services can be provided to the user by referring to said ID number, the balance information, and a service amount,

wherein, when the settlement authentication device determines that the service can be provided, the settlement authentication device sends a response to the service provision device to permit provision of the specific service to said information terminal device, and subtracts from the balance information an amount of money equivalent to the service amount.

41. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein, when determining whether the specific service can be provided, if the at least one ID number has not been validated, or than the service amount of the specific service is greater than the current balance, said settlement authentication device prohibits the provision of the specific service.

42. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein said settlement authentication device is configured to store user-specific information identifying the user associated with said ID number,

wherein, when a new ID number is issued, the user-specific information associated with the new ID number is referenced, a determination is made as to whether there exists an ID number already registered for the same user, and when there exists an ID number already registered, the new ID number is associated with the already-registered ID number and stored, and the new ID number is validated, and,

wherein, when the settlement authentication device determines whether said specific service can be provided, if the service amount of the service to be provided is larger than the sum of the balance associated with the already-registered ID number and a balance associated with the new ID number, provision of the service is prohibited.

43. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein the at least one ID number on said media includes a plurality of sub-ID numbers, each sub-ID number corresponding to a different service of said plurality of services.

44. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein there are a plurality of different service provision devices, each providing one or more different services of said plurality of services, and each providing said one or more services in response to requests including said at least one ID number received from said user using said information terminal device.

45. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein said media is supplied in the form of a plurality of separable sheets, each bearing different said ID numbers.

46. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein said media is supplied in the form of an online slip displayed to the user on the information terminal device and printed by the user for presentation at the settlement terminal device.

47. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein, when determining whether said specific service can be provided, if the current balance is less than the service amount of the specific service to be provided by a predetermined amount of money, said settlement authentication device causes the transmission of warning information to said information terminal device.

48. (New) The system according to claim 40,

wherein said media is a slip on which are recorded said ID number and other information, and which specifies the amount of money to be paid by the user, and,

wherein the settlement terminal device can input the ID number recorded on the slip and other information, and can transmit the input ID number and other information, and the fact that the user has paid said amount of money.

49. (New) A settlement method for making settlement of payment for a plurality of different services, the method comprising:

receiving by a user at an information terminal device an online slip including at least one ID number displayed on the information terminal device;

presenting the at least one ID number at a settlement terminal device at a retail location and paying a money amount by the user, said money amount being associated with the at least one ID number for use in future payment for services;

transmitting, by the settlement terminal device, the at least one ID number and the money amount as balance information to a settlement authentication device over a public network;

receiving, by a service provision device, a request for a specific service of said plurality of different services from the information terminal device and the associated at least one ID number;

transmitting, by the service provision device, over the public network to the settlement authentication device, the ID number and a service amount when accepting the ID number displayed on the information terminal device as the method of payment for the specific service;

determining by the settlement authentication device whether the specific service of said plurality of services can be provided to the user by referring to said ID number, the balance information, and the service amount;

transmitting the settlement result over the public network to the service provision device; and

providing the specific service to the user when the settlement result indicates that the balance information exceeded the service amount.

50. (New) The method according to claim 49,

wherein, the step of determining whether said specific service can be provided further includes that, if the current balance is less than the service amount of the specific service to be provided by a predetermined amount of money, said settlement authentication device causes the transmission of warning information to said information terminal device.

51. (New) The method according to claim 49, further including a step of

providing a plurality of sub-ID numbers with said at least one ID number, each sub-ID number corresponding to a different service of said plurality of services.

52. (New) A system for providing a plurality of different services to a user based on an amount of money paid by the user, said system comprising:

a media having at least one ID number recorded thereon;

a settlement terminal device located at a retail location and configured to read the ID number recorded on the media at the time of settlement, to cause the input of balance information equivalent to the amount of money paid by the user in association with the ID number, and to transmit said ID number in association with said balance information to a settlement authentication device via a public network;

said settlement authentication device being configured to store said balance information in association with said ID number received from said settlement terminal device;

a terminal device used by the user to for accessing said plurality of services by sending requests to a plurality of service provision devices over the public network;

each said service provision device of said plurality of service provision devices providing a service different from other said service provision devices, and being configured to send a query over the public network to said settlement authentication device to determine whether to provide a particular service in response to a request from the user at the terminal device; and

said settlement authentication device further being configured to receive each said query and determine whether the particular service corresponding to the query can be provided to the user by referring to said ID number, the balance information, and a service amount,

wherein, when the settlement authentication device determines that the particular service can be provided, the settlement authentication device sends a

response to the service provision device that sent the query to permit provision of the particular service to said information terminal device, and subtracts from the balance information an amount of money corresponding to the service amount.

53. (New) The system according to claim 52,

wherein the at least one ID number on said media includes a plurality of sub-ID numbers, each sub-ID number corresponding to a different service of said plurality of services provided by a different service provision device of said plurality of service provision devices.